

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Report from the Interagency Task Force on Dual Credit

History/Background:

Existing Policy. In April 2006, the Kentucky Board of Education established the Interagency Task Force on Dual Credit to examine the need for comprehensive policy for dual credit and to make recommendations in the broad issue areas of rigor, access, affordability and program evaluation. The Board's action was preceded by a study conducted by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, which concluded that:

“The growth of dual enrollment in recent years has prompted increased interest in this educational option and reignited discussion of dual enrollment policy. Discussion of dual enrollment policy quickly becomes complicated, however, because dual enrollment has been proposed to serve a wide range of educational goals, including reduction of high school dropout rates and improved workplace readiness. At this point, however, we do not have the data needed to evaluate these possibilities.ⁱ”

Based on the intense interest in dual credit in the state and national research identifying dual credit's role in high school reformⁱⁱ, the Board decided to build upon the Council's work to determine if and how the state might exploit dual credit as a strategy to improve chances of success for college and educational attainment. The Vision Statement adopted by the Task Force positions dual credit as a way to improve student preparation for postsecondary education. It also recognizes that dual credit can help to ensure curriculum standards and expectations will be aligned P-16.

The Task Force made a preliminary report to the Kentucky Board of Education in December 2006. At that time, the Task Force asked the Board to prioritize issue areas for the work and the Board responded that eligibility, access, funding and program evaluation should take precedence.

While the Task Force has good representation from major stakeholders in Kentucky, its ability to synthesize national research and to conduct research was limited. The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) asked Jobs for the Future (JFF), a nonprofit national policy and research firm, to help the Task Force enhance dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. Through the Ford Foundation's Bridges to Opportunity Grant, KCTCS sponsored the work as part of its policy initiative to support career pathways. The deliverables from the JFF research team were delivered in phases, beginning in February 2007 and continuing through May.

The Interagency Task Force Report to the Kentucky Board of Education (attached) contains the major work products of the Task Force to date: Vision; Anticipated Benefits; Essential

Conditions; Principles; and, Recommendations. This work is accompanied by the two papers produced for the Task Force by Jobs for the Future: *Briefing Paper to Kentucky Dual Credit Task Force*, February 2007; and, *Recommendations for Data Collection and Analysis to Kentucky Dual Credit Task Force*, May 2007.

The Task Force will meet again to discuss the Board's response to this report. The Task Force is also seeking guidance on next steps. If the Board agrees with the recommendations, further work may be necessary to refine the recommendations and move them toward implementation. This could be coordinated through the existing Task Force or by referring the recommendations to various agencies.

At the August 2007 meeting, the Task Force is seeking Board support for its recommendations and direction on next steps.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

The high school experience is not meaningful for every child. Therefore, comprehensive action research focused on the middle and high school experience as well as school and district efforts to provide opportunities for success for all students is critical. We need to ensure that students have equitable access to pathways that lead students to proficiency and successful transition to next levels of learning. Dual credit is one of those pathways and, so, it must be leveraged strategically and in ways that engage students in greatest need.

Contact Person:

Starr Lewis, Associate Commissioner
Office of Academic and Professional Development
502/564-9850
starr.lewis@education.ky.gov

Deputy Commissioner

Interim Commissioner of Education

Date:

August 2007

ⁱ Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (2006): *The Dual Enrollment of High School Students in Postsecondary Education in Kentucky, 2001-02 to 2004-05*.

ⁱⁱ Hoffman, Nancy. (2005). *Add and Subtract: Dual Enrollment as a State Strategy to Increase Postsecondary Success for Underrepresented Students*. Boston: Jobs for the Future.